

## Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NEA:ALATHERTON,JR.:LAB

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

S/S:M.TANNER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 081258

NODIS

FOR THE AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, SY, US, UR

SUBJECT: LEBANON

1. YOU SHOULD INFORM PRESIDENT ASAD THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED A NOTE FROM THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT, WHICH THE SOVIETS HAVE ALREADY PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED, IMPLYING THAT UNITS OF THE U.S. SIXTH FLEET IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN ARE THERE FOR PURPOSES OF INTERVENTION IN LEBANON. WE ARE REPLYING TO THE SOVIETS THAT ALL RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENTS SHOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO PREVAIL UPON THE FACTIONS IN LEBANON TO SEEK A POLITICAL SOLUTION AND REFRAIN FROM FURTHER FIGHTING; THAT WE WILL DO ALL WE CAN TO THIS END; AND THAT WE ARE CONFIDENT, SO LONG AS OTHERS EXERCISE SIMILAR RESTRAINT, THAT THE DANGERS OF THE PRESENT SITUATION DEVELOPING INTO A WIDER CONFLICT CAN BE AVERTED. I WANT PRESIDENT ASAD TO KNOW THAT OUR NAVAL UNITS ARE IN NO WAY DIRECTED AGAINST SYRIA AND THAT OUR RESPONSE TO THE SOVIETS IS INTENDED TO BE A WARNING TO THEM AGAINST INTERVENTION. WE ARE ALSO TELLING THE SOVIETS THAT WE ARE

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SUPPORTING SYRIAN POLITICAL EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A SOLUTION

IN LEBANON AND ARE REMINDING THEM OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO PRESS FOR RESTRAINT ON THE PART OF THOSE LEBANESE PARTIES WHOM THEY SUPPORT, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY. AS PRESIDENT ASAD CERTAINLY KNOWS, THE LEBANESE COMMUNIST PARTY HAS ALLIED

ITSELF WITH THOSE FORCES WHO ARE BACKING JUMBLATT. WHAT WE ARE DOING WITH THE SOVIETS IS DESIGNED TO GET THEM TO BRING PRESSURE ON JUMBLATT. WHATEVER WE DO SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD IN THAT CONTEXT.

2. YOU SHOULD ALSO TELL ASAD THAT AMBASSADOR BROWN IS CONTINUING ACTIVELY HIS ROUND OF MEETINGS WITH LEADING LEBANESE PERSONALITIES. IN HIS MEETING FRIDAY AFTERNOON WITH JUMBLATT, THE LATTER DESCRIBED HIS OBJECTIVES IN TERMS THAT WOULD REQUIRE MAJOR CHANGES IN THE LEBANESE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SYSTEM GOING FAR BEYOND THE ARRANGEMENT WORKED OUT WITH SYRIAN ASSISTANCE IN JANUARY. JUMBLATT ALSO DID NOT RULE OUT A RESUMPTION OF FIGHTING IN THE ABSENCE OF REFORMS OF THE KIND HE SEEKS. AMBASSADOR BROWN TOLD JUMBLATT FORCEFULLY THAT THE MAJOR CHANGES HE SEEKS ARE UNREALISTIC IN CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES AND WARNED HIM OF THE DANGERS IN THE SITUATION IF THE CEASEFIRE IS NOT MAINTAINED AND A POLITICAL SOLUTION, INCLUDING THE CONSTITUTIONAL ELECTION OF A NEW PRESIDENT, IS NOT RAPIDLY ACHIEVED. AMBASSADOR BROWN ALSO MADE IT CLEAR TO JUMBLATT THAT WE ARE SUPPORTING SYRIA'S POLITICAL EFFORTS. AMBASSADOR BROWN INTENDS TO MAKE FURTHER EFFORTS WITH JUMBLATT AND HIS ASSOCIATES.

3. IN ADDITION TO PASSING THE FOREGOING INFORMATION TO PRESIDENT ASAD, I AGREE THAT IN THE MEETING YOU PROPOSE TO HAVE WITH SHIHABI (DAMASCUS 2012) IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR YOU TO GET ACROSS THE POINT THAT KEEPING OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF SYRIAN INTERVENTION COULD BE MORE EFFECTIVE THAN INTERVENTION ITSELF WHICH WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE COULD TRIGGER A DANGEROUS CHAIN REACTION. IT WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL TO PROBE SHIHABI IN AN EFFORT TO LEARN MORE SPECIFICALLY THE ELEMENTS OF THE POLITICAL SOLUTION THE SYRIANS ARE WORKING TO BRING ABOUT. HOW DO

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THEY ENVISAGE GETTING THE PRINCIPAL LEBANESE ACTORS TO AGREE QUICKLY ON A PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION, DO THEY BELIEVE THE REFORMS IN THE GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE WORKED OUT IN JANUARY AND ANNOUNCED IN PRESIDENT FRANGIE'S SEVENTEEN POINTS ARE STILL A VIABLE BASIS FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION, WHO DO THEY ENVISAGE ASSUMING KEY GOVERNMENTAL ROLES, AND HOW DO THEY THINK LEBANESE SECURITY AND MILITARY FORCES CAN BE RECONSTITUTED SO THAT A NEW

LEBANESE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE THE MEANS TO ENFORCE ITS  
AUTHORITY? KISSINGER

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NNN

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